Restrictions

On 4 May, the Finnish Government announced the lifting of restrictions currently in force on cross-border traffic across Schengen internal borders from 14 May. The measure will allow employment or commission-related commuting and other essential traffic. Holiday and recreational travel abroad is still not recommended. The Finnish Border Guard drafted specific guidelines on the gradual opening of border traffic.

Controls aim at further reducing movement at the main commuting border crossing points with Sweden, Norway and Estonia; only work travel that is strictly necessary will be permitted, and employees must carry an employer’s certificate stating that the work is essential.

Maritime passenger transport is prohibited: companies operating from Sweden, Estonia and Germany to Finland are requested to suspend the sale of tickets for ships departing on or after 11 April 2020. The provision does not apply to goods and freight transport operations.

Regarding the Åland Islands, air passenger transport is permitted only on scheduled flights from Stockholm, Helsinki and Turku to Mariehamn. Passengers travelling from Åland with the destination of mainland Finland are also permitted to travel.

People entering Finland are obliged to remain under quarantine-like conditions for 14 days. Such requirements do not apply to essential border crossings of emergency medical services and rescue service personnel or to freight transport.

Regarding traffic between Finland and non-Schengen countries (i.e. Russia), Finnish Border Guard officials allow the entry/exit of the following:

- Licence types: C1, C1/E, C, C/E, D1, D1/E, D and D/E.
• Return to Finland: Finnish nationals and their family members; nationals of other EU and Schengen countries and their family members who are residing in Finland; third country nationals residing in Finland with residence permit.

• Returning transit traffic to other EU or Schengen countries or via them: nationals of EU and Schengen countries and their family members, third country nationals residing in another EU or Schengen country with residence permit.

• Exit of third country nationals.

• Necessary traffic, which is:
  - Healthcare and rescue service professionals/personnel, health researchers, and elderly care professionals.
  - Transport personnel and other transport staff to the extent necessary. Companies should be aware that, despite additional controls the borders remain open and functional; previous restrictions are still in place.
  - Diplomats, staff of international organisations, military personnel and humanitarian aid workers carrying out their work.
  - Necessary transit and return trips.
  - Passengers travelling for imperative family reasons.
  - Persons in need of international protection or for other humanitarian reasons.
  - Other necessary and justified traffic (e.g. maintenance works that require a specific maintenance team or person arriving from another country and whose work cannot be postponed).

Detailed information relating to the travel conditions are available [here](#).

On 15 April, the Finnish Government lifted the temporary restrictions on movement to and from the Uusimaa region which were enforced on 28 March. This will enter into force immediately following the Government’s plenary session, which is scheduled for 13:00 local time.

All other measures, including those on external borders, social distancing, restaurants and schools, etc. remain applicable.

On 23 April, the Finnish government extended the ban of large gatherings of more than 500 people until 31 July 2020, at least.
On 16 June, the Finnish government lifted the state of emergency. From 15 June, controls at the internal border with Norway have also been lifted. Traffic returning to Finland, commuting and other essential traffic are allowed. Controls at the internal border between Finland and Schengen countries (other than Norway) remain in place. Restrictions at external borders remain in place until 14 July.

Self-isolation remains recommended for people arriving from countries that are still subject to internal or external border control. Such countries include Sweden and Russia. Self-isolation is not required if the person arrives from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Denmark or Iceland.

More information can be found here and here.

On 24 June, the Finnish Government updated policies on travel and border crossing rules. Controls at internal borders have been lifted for the following countries: Germany, Italy, Austria, Greece, Switzerland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Liechtenstein. Travel to Finland has been allowed for people coming from Croatia, Cyprus and Ireland. The Government will continue to assess the overall situation in the Schengen Area and the EU Member States until 10 July, and will update the list of countries based on the development of the pandemic at that time.

Based on the current epidemiological assessment, internal border control and travel restrictions will continue between Finland and the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Poland, France, Sweden and the Czech Republic, with the exception of leisure boating. Anyone travelling from Finland to these countries must remember to check the entry restrictions for the country of destination.

Further information on measures adopted can be found here.

Relieves

Temporary relaxations of driving and rest times rules have ceased to apply on 31 May. Normal driving times and rest periods will apply again as of 1 June 2020.

On 2 April, the Finnish Government issued a decree with the aim to ensure continuity of dangerous goods transport operations.

Current exceptional circumstances may make it impossible to provide training and tests related to professional qualifications in the transport of dangerous goods, or
scheduled and interim inspections of tanks, or vehicle inspections for the carriage of dangerous goods. Therefore, the validity of licences, approvals and certificates which will expire in the near future can, on an exceptional basis, be further extended in 2020.

On 16 April, the Finnish Government issued new decrees that bring into force special agreements on the transport of dangerous goods. The decrees enter into force on 17 April. With the special agreements (M326, M327 and RID 4/2020), the periodic inspections of pressure receptacles, UN tanks and UN-MEG containers, that would expire during the coronavirus situation, will exceptionally remain in force with special arrangements in Finland and other signatory countries of the agreement. The special agreements may be applied to transport by road and rail that are mostly used for the carriage of dangerous goods. The agreements will be available on the website of the Transport and Communications Agency - Traficom. The Agency will provide information in Finnish and Swedish.

For additional information, members can consult the following webpages: UNECE and OTIF.

On 19 May, the Finnish Parliament adopted a legislative package on temporary modifications to transport legislation. The amendments aim to facilitate business activities and people's daily lives and ensure well-functioning transport operations under the emergency conditions resulting from the coronavirus epidemic. Concerning road transport, relevant measures are the following:

- The notification period of providers of passenger transport services will be shortened from 60 days to 5 days.
- The Finnish Transport and Communications Agency will be allowed to renew a taxi driver's licence so that the applicant can submit the required medical certificate within six months of the renewal of the licence. This applies to licences that expire between 16 March and 31 October 2020.

Full press release can be found here.

**SOURCE:** FinMobility, SKAL and Ministry of Transport and Communication